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Nearly 1 in 5 smartphone users are sexting

Suzanne Choney
TODAY

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msnbc.com file

1 in 5 moms and dads of children under 18 say they use their smartphones to sext, says Lookout Mobile Security.

Almost a year after Anthony Weiner's sexting scandal led him to **resign from office**, Americans seem to be as careless about using their smartphones as the former congressman was. Nearly 1 in 5 Americans who have a smartphone say they have used it for sexting, sharing explicit photos or text messages with others, according to a new survey.

The biggest age groups for sexting are 18- to 34-year-old men (32 percent) and 35- to 44-year-old women (25 percent), says Lookout Mobile Security, which sponsored the Harris Interactive poll of 2,097 adults.

More than a quarter of adults admitted "taking or receiving explicit photos" with their smartphones, but "as expected, 18- to 34-year old smartphone owners send or receive explicit pictures and/or videos much more than their older counterparts," with 40 percent doing so, Lookout said.

Still, it's not just for the very young — 1 in 10 people age 55 and older with smartphones said they also sexted — or for those who aren't parents — 30 percent of moms and dads with children under age 18 also said they have sent or received explicit photos on their phones.

When it comes to video, 11 percent of Americans said they record explicit videos on their phones, including 18 percent of dads and 5 percent of moms.

About 1 in 10 men and women said they save romantic prospects' "contact information under a code name on their smartphone."

If any of these stats make you uneasy, **Lookout** has made its point.

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"Only 3 percent of American adults who are smartphone owners say their biggest concern about losing their phone is that their inappropriate pictures or text messages could be exposed," the company said in a release.

"This number is shockingly low when you consider that 69 percent of smartphone owners have lost their phone," and with more than 1 in 5 admitting to taking or receiving racy photos.

Among the company's suggestions (aside from using its software or that of another company's):

- Turn-off your text message pop-ups, "so people nearby don't get a peek at any photos or texts you don't want seen."
- "Set a passcode and make it strong. It's the first defense for keeping prying eyes out of your personal business."
- Lookout or similar software can help you "find your missing phone or remotely lock and wipe your photos and contacts (so your private lives stay private)."



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